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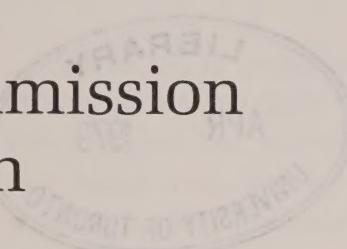


SUES



A Background Paper  
on Behalf of

The Royal Commission  
on the Northern  
Environment.



Chapter

4

## The Dynamics of Power—Energy Projects

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The bracketed notations following the quotations identify the individual or organization making the presentation before the Commission, site of the preliminary hearing, and the page number in the transcript where the quotation may be found.

# Chapter 4

## THE DYNAMICS OF POWER—ENERGY PROJECTS

The perceived social impacts of major undertakings, such as the Reed, Onakawana and Polar Gas projects, were especially drawn to my attention. Some people spoke of projects such as these as important for the economic survival of their towns. Others were critical, describing the negative effects past developments have had on their communities. All major development projects contemplated for the north today are in one way or another energy-related. Either they are energy-producing or energy-consuming or both. On the theme of energy in the north, the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment became acutely aware that it was dealing with a core issue.

—Mr. Justice E. P. Hartt

### *A Controversial Choice of Paths*

THE NORTH faces major environmental disturbances whichever energy paths are undertaken, the Royal Commission was told. There are choices: i.e., conservation and small-scale production on the one hand and, on the other, massive energy projects involving pipelines, river diversions and thermal generating plants adjoining open-pit coal mining operations.

To some northerners the temptation does exist for prosperity in the near term, to opt for further growth and a stimulated economy. But, as with past northern power projects, it is generally believed that, overall, the economy helped most will be the one in the province's south. In the past, following the boom of an initial construction period, such projects have failed to provide significant employment opportunities to northerners even during normal operations. Under such circumstances, the Commission was asked to appreciate why northerners generally are cynical about future energy developments north of 50.

Northerners declared themselves aware that their region has rivers in the north with substantial hydroelectric potential, power sources that remain unharvested. Lignite deposits could be mined to fuel power generating installations.

Northern Ontario is also being considered a corridor for a natural gas pipeline that would bring energy supplies from the Arctic to link with existing pipelines that feed the industrial south.

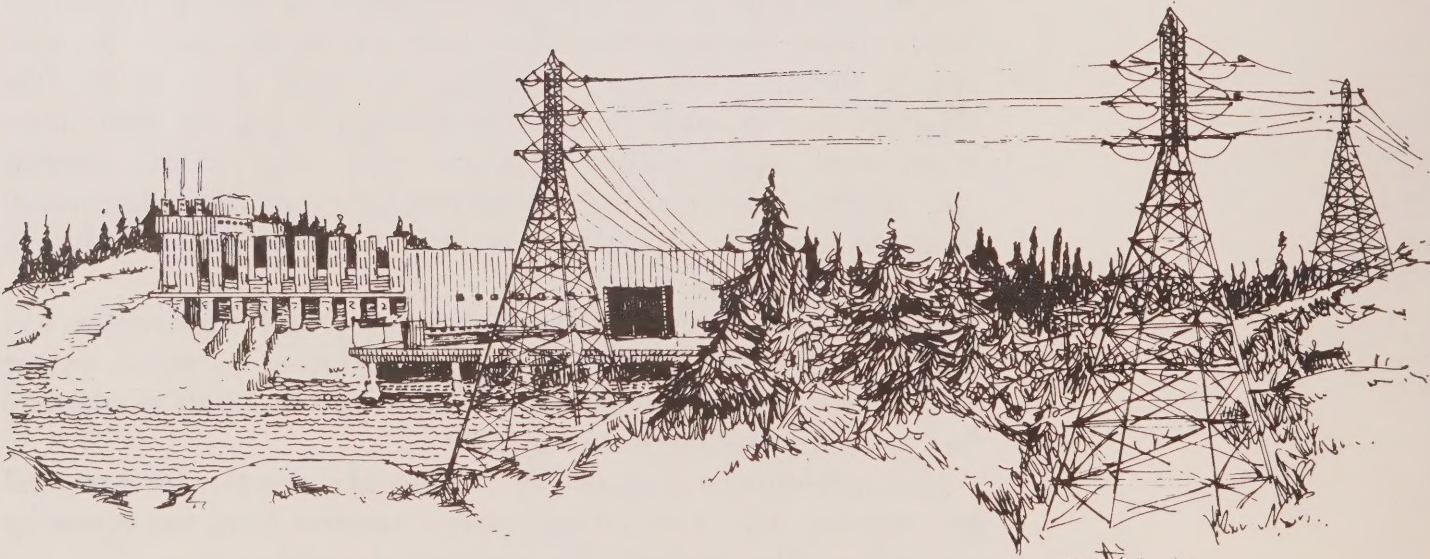
Further on the question of energy-related matters, Ontario's far north is being viewed as a possible site for nuclear waste disposal, a burial ground for radioactive debris generated by nuclear power plants in the south.

Some, who were opponents of all development in principle, argued that society should get along with less energy. They saw any start on energy projects in Ontario's north as unwarranted at this time, as merely signalling further wasteful consumption in the south.

Conservationists also placed themselves in opposition to power development in the north, pointing to environmental damage caused by dams and diversions in the past. Some expressed concern about the anticipated sulphur dioxide emissions from future coal fired thermal power plants, and the acid rain that may ensue.

Some northerners appearing before the Commission described themselves as "moderates" advocating a modest level of energy production and consumption in the north, enough to allow northern residents to satisfy their own needs without much damage to their environment.

Still others saw the recommendation of small-scale environmentally-protective technologies as utopian solutions to a mounting national energy demand that would inevitably require using all of Canada's northern resources. In the view of northerners favouring expansion, expert attention should be focused on how the north could maximize its return on resources while minimizing harmful environmental impacts in the large-scale energy projects of the future.



# The North's Role in Energy Production

Development in northern Ontario is interrelated with the need for energy supply. Many of the projects considered at the hearings of the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, i.e., Polar Gas pipeline, Onakawana lignite, Marmion Lake generating station, hydro-electric potential, are energy-based. Critics of such development in the north questioned the need for large-scale energy projects, suggesting instead that alternative energy sources be investigated.

Sun, wind and wood wastes were cited as energy sources for human needs. A separate but negative energy issue raised was whether north-western Ontario should tolerate nuclear waste disposal in its outlying regions.

## The Energy Issue—No Subject More Pertinent

Northern Ontario possesses energy resources of every kind — fossil fuels such as coal, timber for burning and methanol production, uranium for nuclear plants, the elements themselves for solar, wind and water power.

The Commission was told that, in the past, damming of rivers not only produced power but also caused flooding of Indian burial grounds, wild rice fields, fishing areas, timber stands and hunting areas, all without adequate notice or compensation to the people affected. Current schemes for the future damming of the great rivers flowing into James Bay brought such anxieties to the surface in northern communities.

Native representatives maintained that, previously, energy decisions had been made without considering benefits or liabilities to the people most directly affected. Incomprehensibly, say natives, even though hydroelectric dams were often constructed close to Indian reserves, it was not until much later that power was connected to those nearby communities.

Native organizations spoke of resentment of the steep costs of electricity to them after they had already suffered a rise in their costs of living in the aftermath of energy development.

On the question of the transportation of energy from the eastern Arctic through northern Manitoba and Ontario by the proposed Polar Gas pipeline, some people spoke out in favour of the project as a potential economic stimulus in the north. Native spokesmen, on the other hand, warned that the scheme would have major negative impacts, firstly on the hunting and trapping activities of their people and secondly, on the migration patterns of many animals.

Small-scale energy production was recommended to the Royal Commission. Timber companies spoke of using their wood wastes as a fuel to operate pulp mills. Other visionaries spoke of methanol from wood as a substitute for gasoline.

Some people in the north reported themselves returning to the use of wood products for home heating and cooking. A few individual families in the north had experimented successfully with solar heating and wind generators which they thought might be more universally adapted to their environment.

Presentations before the Commission constituted compelling pleas and warnings — stressing among many questions for consideration, the importance of conservation, the finite nature of most northern resources and the need to treat those resources which are renewable with respect. Underlying all was the fear of northerners that, in the final analysis, decisions about major energy projects would be made without their knowledge or involvement.

# Energy—Options and Alternatives

The history of the north is highlighted by distinct periods of economic dominance, first the fur trade, followed by timber cutting and gold mining, and now potential electric power production. In today's energy-hungry world, northerners can anticipate that the south will inevitably look to the north's energy resources — rivers, forests, coal and uranium.

This premonition about the future may explain why, during the course of its meetings in the north, the Commission heard views expressed by many groups and individuals about the need to develop and use sources of energy alternative to those that despoil the environment:

*"Alternative methods of resource and energy development must be intensively research and examined. We believe that there are energy systems and technologies which respect the environment and are in keeping with the maintenance and development of the livelihood and lifestyle of native people. We particularly recommend that wind and solar power systems for the north be extensively studied by your Commission."*

(Ontario Federation of Labour, Kenora, p. 2661)

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The Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility also urged the Commission to direct attention to alternative energy sources for the north:

*"In the broader issue of energy generally, one sees that the north possesses the opportunity to follow its own energy path, learning from the mistakes of the south . . . This Commission has the opportunity to examine alternatives in energy and lifestyles. Energy self-sufficiency would be a worthy goal for the north. Appropriate alternative technologies such as wind power should be examined. Any study of a contemporary society and its environment will inevitably lead to a confrontation with the energy element in the life of a community."*

(Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, Toronto, p. 2108)

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At present the province depends almost entirely on non-renewable energy sources. Coupled with its forecast of oil and natural gas shortages by the mid-1980's, the Ministry of Energy declared that unless Ontario finds more secure energy sources we will be forced to depend on increasing amounts on foreign suppliers:

*"That is looking forward ten years or so, and if we look even further into the future when natural gas and crude oil are in short supply, it is clear that the transition to renewable types of energy will be essential."*

(Ministry of Energy, Toronto, p. 2232)

Our dependence on non-renewable sources of energy places Ontario in what the Ministry of Energy called a "somewhat insecure position." (p. 2232)

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Several northerners expressed reservations about such a dependence and the little attention being given to research on alternative sources. One of them was a Kenora high school teacher:

*"To illustrate the direction that science is now taking us, and towards which governments are pushing, it is sufficient to note that 75% of the money on energy research is spent on nuclear energy. Only one per cent is spent on so-called alternative sources such as wind, solar energy and biomass."*

(David Schwartz, Kenora, p. 2963)

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Concern was expressed about making the right decision now for future energy development:

*"Without careful consideration, our energy future could be a damaging fact of life should we hastily choose the incorrect energy path. It is absolutely critical that one realizes the central role of energy policy in future development."*

(Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, Toronto, p. 2106)

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Some people were disturbed that Ontario Hydro statistics showing power shortages in northwestern Ontario were being employed to justify Hydro's desire to go nuclear. They called for a careful examination of options and priorities:

*" . . . so when northerners come to discuss the future of their own area, energy sources for future development must play a significant role. Let us not be caught in a Catch 22 lust for growth."*

(Alex and Delia Rosenthal, Ear Falls, p. 813)

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But what voice will northerners have in the energy debate?

*"The most pressing developments in the energy field are the ever-increasing energy demands of a very powerful southern community."*

(Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, Toronto, p. 2106)

Ontario Hydro stated that the north was more dependent on the south for its energy needs than most people realized:

"Many people in the north believe that most of the electricity from our northeast generation is transported to southern Ontario . . . but generally speaking, just the opposite is true . . . Northern Ontario requires assistance from the . . . nuclear plants in the south to meet its electricity needs."

(Ontario Hydro, Timmins, p. 1220)

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While parts of the north may eventually be dependent on power generated by southern nuclear plants, the major concern may not be how the power was produced, but disposal of nuclear wastes:

"There has been talk of using the north as a dump for nuclear waste. We all know that it takes hundreds, even thousands, of years for it to deactivate. I've also read where Pickering, Ontario might close down because it can't get rid of this waste. I can only speak for myself, but I feel confident that others will back me up in saying that we do not want our virgin countryside, lakes and rivers to become unavailable to us and others from the south because of radioactive material dumped there in the 1980's."

(Robert Bell, Sioux Lookout, p. 346)

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Northerners' expressed concern had a factual basis, according to the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, quoting from Dr. Kenneth Hare's recently published report:<sup>1</sup>

"Remoteness from settlements will probably be preferred by most members of the Canadian public. Few people want to see the repository close to their own homes. Hence the inhabitants of densely settled southern Ontario are likely to opt overwhelmingly for disposal in remote central or northern areas."

(Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, Toronto, p. 2107)

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<sup>1</sup>Energy, Mines and Resources Canada, Energy Policy Sector, Report EP77-6: The Management of Canada's Nuclear Wastes, by A.M. Aikin, J.M. Harrison and F.K. Hare (Chairman). Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1977.

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Dr. Hare himself appeared before the Commission at hearings in Toronto and verified that his report had recommended the disposal of nuclear wastes underground in stable geological formations:

"Although at no point during the report do we say where, that actually means northern Ontario west of a line from Wawa to the Attawapiskat River."

(Dr. Kenneth Hare, Toronto, p. 2156)

Predictably, the immediate reaction of some northerners to nuclear waste disposal near them was negative:

"The members of council have individual concerns, but in particular, one concern we have is that northwestern Ontario may become a dumping ground for nuclear waste. Why has there been no direct government contact with concerned municipal organizations in this area?"

(Town of Keewatin, Kenora, p. 2652)

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Although the die may already be cast, some people saw the simplest way to avoid the problem of nuclear waste disposal as ending further commitment to nuclear power:

"By shifting to more environmentally appropriate technologies and less consumption-oriented lifestyles, combined with communities and buildings of more efficient design, it may be possible to forestall for a long time, and perhaps forever, any need for additional nuclear power. This is desirable because nuclear power is probably the ultimate in hard technologies."

(David Schwartz, Kenora, p. 2957)

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Aside from how energy is produced, efforts towards conservation must certainly be intensified in the view of a number of northern residents. Longer and colder winters in the north mean that fuel consumption for home heating is two or three times greater in the north than in the south (where energy prices are lower). Current government policies were criticized for not helping the north to cope with this reality:

"In regard to insulation of homes, it's great to say the government will help those owning a home built prior to 1924. Most communities north of the 50th parallel were not even in the making or even thought about till someone or something brought about their existence. I suggest that a standard of insulation be set in order to save energy, not what year the house was built in, then everyone might benefit in keeping down fuel consumption and costs."

(Robert Bell, Sioux Lookout, p. 345)

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The Unorganized Communities Association of Northwestern Ontario (UCANO-West) told the Commission about its efforts:

"We have done a lot of research in this area of finding alternative energy sources to alleviate the higher cost of conventional energy in remote northern communities, and it is the hope of UCANO to be able to continue in this particular area over the years to come, but lack of staff has made it impossible to complete an analysis."

(UCANO-West, Kenora, p. 3001)

Community planning was raised as one means to reduce energy requirements:

"Communities should be designed in such a way as to reduce their demands on unrenewable energy sources . . . One very simple and effective method would be to simply align houses and streets in the community, and other buildings, in such a way that their major windows would be south-facing. Any south-facing window in this northern climate acts as an efficient net gainer of heat through our winters."

(David Schwartz, Kenora, p. 2956)

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The town of Sioux Lookout felt that small-scale alternative energy technologies was an area they would like to explore:

"Small-scale production technology is a field where federally sponsored research could provide a substantial stimulus to the economy of small isolated towns such as our own. To mention just a few fields that we think are worthy of future research and which we think could substantially benefit communities like Sioux Lookout: solar energy, hydroponics, and processing of wood-waste on-site, or conversion into energy, conversion into methanol and conversion into heat."

(Town of Sioux Lookout, Sioux Lookout, p. 42)

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Wood as a source of energy was a topic which received considerable attention. TREES (Taking Responsible Environmental and Economic Safeguards) pointed out that:

"The energy shortage and consequent high fuel prices have already sparked a return to the use of wood heat in this area as it has across the country. If we could make a few suppositions here, if communities north of 50 are forced to return en masse to their use of wood heat, how many acres per year of standing timber have to be cut to provide the necessary fuel?"

(TREES, Red Lake, p. 654)

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The Kenora District Campowner's Association stressed the importance of wood in energy terms:

"Recently, since the energy crisis, it has been stated wood is the only inexhaustible energy supply in the world. Our concerns must encompass the possibility that the forests are worth much more than just the extraction of them by the paper industry."

(Kenora District Campowners Association, Dryden, p. 435)

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The town of Sioux Lookout indicated that forest policy must take into account the potential of wood as an energy source:

"Sooner or later all the wood producing areas of the world will have to make similar commitments to regeneration — particularly as wood once again becomes an energy resource."

(Town of Sioux Lookout, Sioux Lookout, p. 31)

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The Ministry of Energy described studies they are involved in which are testing the applicability of such alternate power sources as wood and wind:

"The ministry has various projects underway relating both to the northern part of the province and also to the province in general . . . to develop the commercial application covering such matters as wood waste and the project proposed at Hearst which would use energy from pulp mills for production of steam and perhaps electricity. Fuel such as methanol could also be developed and that is under consideration. Wind generation — in a word it is economical to consider wind power based on studies which we have had and we are quite hopeful that we can develop some such projects."

(Ministry of Energy, Toronto, p. 2236)

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While solar energy may not be economically feasible on a year-round basis, the long summer days in the north mean that:

"Solar energy is feasible, if only for heating hot water tanks during the summer. People should reap the benefits of this free solar energy with little or no effect on the environment."

(Robert Bell, Sioux Lookout, p. 346)

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There was a broadly expressed desire that society consider more environmentally-appropriate energy technologies as real and viable alternatives. As Jim Mezzatay of Cat Lake put it:

"I want to talk about the water harnessing schemes. With regards to the water damming and the diversion schemes, I have only this to say about them, the damming of these major river sources to generate hydroelectric power is not the only method of getting power. What must be done is to develop alternative power sources other than the use of this water."

(Jim Mezzatay, Osnaburgh, p. 1826)

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Through their submissions, the people of the north did indicate that they were eager for energy resource development which can serve their needs; but such developments, they warned, must be so carefully planned that they do not destroy the environment.

# Onakawana—Sizeable by any Measure

Of immediate concern to northeastern Ontario is the Onakawana Development Limited's proposal to strip mine a lignite coal deposit a few miles south of Moosonee. In its submission to the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, the company reasoned that the coal could power a thermal generating plant or briquetted and shipped for use elsewhere. Many northerners expressed interest in the potential employment benefits while native people were concerned with how many northerners would, in fact, be hired. The effects on the environment from air and water pollution were also questioned.

## Lignite—Brown Coal in Huge Deposits

What may well be the major development proposal for Ontario north of 50 in the immediate future is the project now being undertaken by Onakawana Development Limited, a subsidiary of Manalta Coal Limited of Alberta, a company currently operating six open cut coal mines in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Onakawana Development Limited proposes to operate a large-scale lignite mining venture some 60 miles south of Moosonee, at a railway siding on the Ontario Northland Railway known as Onakawana on the Abitibi River.

In January 1973, a special task force with representatives from the Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Hydro, Management Board of Cabinet, the Conservation Council of Ontario and the local representatives of Moosonee reported to the Provincial Secretary for Resources Development on the mining of the lignite deposit at Onakawana.

The Onakawana Task Force concluded that, on balance, the local and regional effects of developing the resource could be advantageous provided appropriate steps were taken to maximize the benefit to the local people in the region and to minimize the adverse environmental effects.

There is no settlement at Onakawana and only a handful of people live in the immediate region. The economy of the lower Abitibi depends mainly on logging, sawmilling, trapping, tourists, hunters and public services. In the region of Onakawana, the land is flat, poorly drained, mainly black spruce muskeg.

There is, however, a huge deposit of lignite, low-grade brown coal, covering some eight square miles and estimated at about 190 million recoverable tons, currently valued at between 1.5 and 3 billion dollars depending upon the method of exploitation. While no full resource survey has been carried out in the area, the region does possess deposits of industrial minerals including china clay, silica sand, kaolin and limestone.

The proposal to strip mine the lignite deposit at Onakawana is one of the few known opportunities for large-scale economic development in the Hudson Bay Lowlands area.

To resource developers, the project has great appeal. To conservationists, the method of extraction — strip mining — arouses concerns about extensive environmental damage.

In their depositions to the Royal Commission, business interests saw open pit mining of the Onakawana lignite deposit as a highly productive, profitable enterprise, certainly less risky and dangerous than underground mining.

The proponent of this massive project<sup>1</sup>, Onakawana Development Limited, maintained that its investment would provide several thousand jobs during the construction period and several hundred during the operational stage. There were, nevertheless, persistent questions regarding such development. "For whom?" and "At what cost?" — were continually repeated and posed at the hearings.

Northern residents voiced many anxieties. What will happen to the waters downstream from the mining site? What will happen to the birds, the animals and the people who depend upon these resources? If the project goes ahead what will be done to ensure that jobs do go to local people? What will be done to reclaim the land when all the lignite has been mined?

Underlying these concerns was the larger issue of whether the power envisioned by planners of this project was, indeed, needed in Ontario's overall energy prospects. The existence of Onakawana lignite has been known since the 17th century. Do we really need to mine now? If the answer is yes, then northern residents are ready with another question. Do we have time enough to plan properly for this development in the north? Many argued that we must ensure that that time is available if past mistakes are not to be repeated.

<sup>1</sup>The proposal is to have the 190 million ton Onakawana lignite deposit strip mined, produce electricity in a 1000 megawatt on-site thermal generating station or briquette the coal for use elsewhere.



# Onakawana—Light, Heat and Power—For Whose Benefit?

Onakawana Development Limited (ODL), signed a 21-year lease with the Ministry of Natural Resources, effective February 1, 1978, giving it the right to mine, stockpile and process lignite coal. Under the terms of the lease, ODL is required to establish within seven to nine years, or longer if approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources, a mining operation which will mine, produce, sell or otherwise utilize not less than one million tons of mined coal each year thereafter.

Before any construction can begin, however, the project must undergo an environmental assessment, as the project has been designated for review under the Environmental Assessment Act.

The end use of the lignite coal remains uncertain at this time (mid-1978). It is important to note, however, that whatever facilities are proposed, a thermal power generating plant or processing facilities for the lignite, these facilities will be reviewed in advance under the Environmental Assessment Act.

Onakawana Development Limited has proposed two alternative uses for the lignite. Their representative, Olaf Wolff, speaking to the Commission at Timmins, stated that:

"There are two ways in which the Onakawana lignite deposit can be developed:

- 1) To supply lignite to a mine-mouth thermal power generating station from which the power could be distributed via the Ontario Hydro distribution grid;
- 2) alternatively, the lignite deposit could be developed to serve industrial and local power needs, principally in northern Ontario . . . On-site upgrading of the low grade Onakawana lignite to increase its heating value, to reduce its moisture content and to put it in a suitable shipping form would probably be required."

(Onakawana Development Limited, Timmins, p. 944)

Ontario Hydro has not yet decided to construct a thermal power plant at Onakawana. When questioned by Commission counsel as to the economic feasibility of Onakawana lignite for a power generating station, Ontario Hydro stated that:

"The results of the 1973 study which compared Onakawana with nuclear and the United States coal-fired plants, proved that nuclear was far cheaper than Onakawana and that Onakawana was somewhat more expensive than United States coal-fired plants at that time."

(Ontario Hydro, Timmins, p. 1228)

Ontario Hydro confirmed, however, that it is reconsidering the feasibility of power from Onakawana:

*'It is being re-studied based on a proposal by the Shawinigan Company. The mining methods and the fuel costs have been studied by the Onakawana Development Limited, with Hydro providing information on incorporation, operation and maintenance costs, financial and escalation rates . . . At this point in time it cannot be said whether the project is feasible or not feasible in an economic sense.'*

(Ontario Hydro, Timmins, p. 1226)

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Some northerners have interpreted Ontario Hydro's reluctance to become involved in the Onakawana proposal as an indication that the power is not required, even though Onakawana Development Limited has promoted the project on the basis of the energy it could provide.

A spokesman for Onakawana Development Limited told the Commission that:

*'Despite recent conservation measures, the energy demand in Ontario continues to rise and even the most conservative projections indicate the need for increasing power generation to meet increasing energy requirements. To this end, the Onakawana lignite deposit, comprising 190 million tons of low grade lignite with an average heating value of approximately 5,000 BTU per pound, can satisfy in a very significant way, some of the forecasted needs for power and energy.'*

(Onakawana Development Limited, Timmins, p. 944)

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Dr. John Spence, a scientist, speaking on behalf of Treaty #9, was not convinced, however, and responded to Onakawana Development Limited's statement with this argument:

*'The fact is that the Onakawana increment is not part of Ontario's power demand projections. Present hydroelectric installations on the Abitibi and Mattagami rivers serve local needs and there is still quite a lot of untapped small-scale hydro potential in this watershed. On a provincial scale, Ontario is committed to nuclear energy and we all know that. The Bruce and Pickering generating stations are functioning and further capacity is planned at Darlington. I would submit there is no proven need of Onakawana power.'*

(Dr. John Spence, Timmins, p. 1086)

Dr. Thomas Alcoze of Laurentian University also felt that the Onakawana proposal did not make sense unless some need for the power could be revealed. He suggested one possible demand for the energy:

"Curiously enough, this single project has been considered so marginal for the last 50 years, that it has never been developed. However, a source close to the project has linked this thermal generating plant to the river diversion scheme.<sup>1</sup> It would supply the necessary energy for the diversion."

(Dr. Thomas Alcoze, Toronto, p. 2048)

<sup>1</sup>Ontario Hydro has been contemplating a massive diversion of the rivers flowing into James Bay. Full study, however, awaits the report of the Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning.

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Other people told the Commission that there was a need for the power that the Onakawana lignite could provide:

"We are very interested in the development of the lignite site at Onakawana. With the serious shortage of fuel and inflated costs, it is time to get on with the development . . . If electrical power can be generated from lignite deposits within reasonable costs, then let us press for the development post-haste rather than go the route of a nuclear generating station with their excessive costs and, more particularly, with the atomic waste that no one has yet found a reasonable means of safely disposing of."

(Town of Cochrane, Timmins, p. 1160)

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Arnold Peters, MP for Timiskaming, argued that development of Onakawana's power should be considered, but he was reluctant to allow the past pattern of development to repeat itself:

"With the shortage of energy occasioned by the price increases in crude oil, first by the OPEC countries and closely followed by the Seven Sisters (the multinational oil companies) other forms of energy became feasible and it certainly is time to look at lignite as a fuel source . . . It appears that Ontario is considering giving this resource to a private company and Ontario Hydro because southern Ontario needs it. Same old story. What a wonderful surprise if, instead, the government, on our behalf, developed the resource, produced electricity and electrified the Ontario Northland Railway from Moosonee to Toronto; and then maybe residents of the north could reduce drastically the cost of transportation on the most efficient and environmentally advanced railroad on the continent. Why not? It's our resource. It's our railroad. Why not the northern people get the primary benefit just this once, through reduced passenger and freight rates?"

(Arnold Peters, MP, Moosonee, p. 3119)

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The Mayor of Smooth Rock Falls recommended a somewhat different approach to Onakawana:

"I suggest that the use of this resource be not solely confined to the export of power from that area down over the 500,000 volt lines to the grid in Sudbury and distributed thereafter throughout southern Ontario and across the border. I suggest that the kaolin deposits there be developed even to a minimal basis, to put a third industry in Ontario besides mining in northern Ontario."

(Town of Smooth Rock Falls, Timmins, p. 2317)

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Others, such as the Prospectors and Developers Association, saw Onakawana as providing needed power to stimulate further mining activity and expansion:

"Hopes for the continued development of northern Ontario are closely linked to mining expansion. The proposed development of the lignite coal mine at Onakawana, the only known coal field of significant size in the province, is an example of a mining operation, which, if proven viable, would be an important potential source of thermally generated power."

(Prospectors and Developers Association, Timmins, p. 1179)

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Speakers who felt that Onakawana power was needed were mainly those who believed that the economy of northeastern Ontario sorely required some sort of stimulus, providing jobs, and leading to other industrial activity:

"These jobs could provide a much-needed source of employment for the native people. We agree with Onakawana Development Limited that locally generated power should encourage other industry to locate in the area, thereby providing a further source of employment for native people."

(James Bay Education Centre, Moosonee, p. 3142)

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The priority concern was jobs — how many, for how long, who will get them, and how immediately and badly are they needed? Onakawana Development Limited described the magnitude of the project to the Commission:

"The mine development alone will cost well over \$100 million. During its three year construction and pre-production period, an average of 300 persons will be employed with an annual payroll of over \$6 million . . . With subsequent operations, a total of 200 persons will be required to mine and process the coal on a round-the-clock basis . . . Annual payroll for each of the full 30 years of the mining operation will amount to over \$5 million. If a major power plant were to be located adjacent to the mine, additional capital expenditures exceeding \$1 billion would be required; a construction crew of up to 2,000 would be employed for the five-year construction period, many of whom could be local residents; and a permanent staff of 150 people

with an annual payroll in excess of \$4 million would be needed during the following 30-year operating period."

(Onakawana Development Limited, Timmins, p. 947)

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Communities in the area expressed enthusiasm over the Onakawana project:

"It will provide much-needed employment for the whole northeastern area. With the high level of unemployment and mass layoffs at Sudbury, the lignite development will help to ease this very serious situation."

(Town of Cochrane, Timmins, p. 1160)

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For an area with a high level of unemployment, such as the Moosonee-Cochrane region, the jobs offered by the Onakawana project would provide welcome relief:

"We believe that this proposed development at Onakawana could, if properly handled, be a real godsend to the people of Moosonee, Cochrane and other communities in the area."

(Cochrane Board of Trade, Timmins, p. 1137)

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Treaty #9, however, did not consider the Onakawana project a "godsend" but rather a serious failure to end the exploitation of the past:

"We do not know how any group of people can be so shortsighted as to advocate any non-renewable, one-industry ventures such as Onakawana, which has a projected lifespan of approximately 40 years under ideal conditions. These groups are so very desperate for employment that they feel that 'band-aid' solutions are necessary. There is enough evidence on hand to prove that the boom and bust cycle will simply continue from such projects, and that more than likely there will be great environmental damage."

(Treaty #9, Moosonee, p. 3090)

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Whether the Onakawana development was the best way to help northerners and the northern economy was also questioned:

"Jobs, but at what cost? Is this really the best and cheapest way of creating employment in the north? When you strip away the high-sounding phrases and promises that were made last night (in Onakawana Development Limited's submission) I think the answer is that they contribute very little."

(Dr. John Spence, Timmins, p. 1087)

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The Cochrane Board of Trade was not prepared, however, to accept this kind of argument:

"We feel obliged to comment on the claim that an industry expected to last only 40 years does not represent permanent employment . . . In these times of world-wide economic uncertainty any industrial development with an estimated life of 40 years can be considered permanent . . . Those of us whose economic existence must take place in the real world would welcome such 'insecurity'."

(Cochrane Board of Trade, Timmins, p. 1138)

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While most people felt that Onakawana could in fact be justified on the basis of the jobs it would provide to an area sorely in need of employment, they expressed some doubts that these jobs would actually go to local people:

"We would be naive to assume that the north, Moosonee more specifically, would benefit the most of such projects as Onakawana. Only limited employment would come our way, but we are underestimated by most as to our resources and capabilities when it comes to adapting to new and different challenges. Given even ground we can compete well with any. We may have to learn new skills and improve on some."

(Moosonee Development Area Board, Moosonee, p. 3110)

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The James Bay Education Centre stressed that:

"Local people must be used if development of the James Bay Lowlands is to benefit those now living in this area, as it should."

(James Bay Education Centre, Moosonee, p. 3142)

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Similar sentiments were expressed by the Moosonee Board of Trade:

"Onakawana wishes to open a large development in this area and is willing, according to their spokesmen, to hire local peoples if they have the necessary skills for the available jobs. We should be charged, as businessmen, with the responsibility of the training; and industry, with the responsibility of job availability."

(Moosonee Board of Trade, Moosonee, p. 3162)

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The Moosonee Metis and Non-Status Indian Association was anxious that their people find jobs with Onakawana:

"With regard to employment, when the Onakawana mine opens, hopefully, this will create jobs for the people in our area, but out of these jobs what per cent will be open for the residents of Moosonee and Moose Factory and the coastal communities? Will it be a quarter, a third or a half? I certainly hope it will be as close to a half as possible because we are suffering from a high rate of unemployment."

(Moosonee Metis and Non-Status Indian Association, Moosonee, p. 3199)

The James Bay Education Centre stressed that if native people are to be employed to any substantial degree by Onakawana, special training courses should begin immediately to ensure that they possess the necessary skills:

"Our people are most anxious to find employment. However, sufficient lead time must be provided to train individuals to work at jobs which require training. There is this time with the Onakawana development. Much of the labour force will not be needed until 1980 and onward. The facilities of the James Bay Education Centre should be utilized to provide job training for native people to the fullest possible extent."

(James Bay Education Centre, Moosonee, p. 3142)

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The Commission learned that some discussions had already occurred between Onakawana Development Limited and the James Bay Education Centre. Onakawana Development Limited expressed an interest in the hiring of native people:

"This (the project) should provide a unique opportunity for the native peoples in the Moosonee to Cochrane region to participate fully in the development of a new resource base, to acquire new skills, to stabilize family incomes and to enrich their lives by blending traditional cultures and modes of living with a modern enterprise. Onakawana Development Limited is familiar with the innovative studies undertaken by the Confederation College of Applied Arts and Technology at Thunder Bay on the training of native employees and supervisors and the use of cultural awareness seminars for the Pickle Lake development project. Relying on these and similar experiences, we would encourage the co-operation and participation of native groups and leaders in the design and undertaking of hiring, training and employee relation programs which would optimize the use of native peoples. While such programs would not be operative for several years, the management of this company is quite willing to meet with the Treaty # 9 Grand Council officials and local band chiefs and councils at any time to develop plans for future action."

(Onakawana Development Limited, Timmins, p. 949)

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The Commission was reminded on several occasions that the Pickle Lake project of preparing local Indian people for employment was not viewed as successful at all by local Indian communities in terms of providing attractive employment opportunities or economic returns.

Some native people were not impressed by the prospect of Onakawana being developed. Chief Charlie Okeese, speaking for Treaty # 9, at the opening hearing in Sioux Lookout, told the Commission that:

*"The project would directly threaten the economy of our people of the southern James Bay region."*  
(Treaty# 9, Sioux Lookout, p. 121)

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Others described other risks of an environmental nature:

"With a 1,000 megawatt powerplant, the cooling water requirements are enormous. It is conceivable that the entire flow of the Abitibi river past the plant might be required for cooling and large amounts of chlorine-contaminated thermal effluent would be released. This would radically alter the environment of the downstream river system and could lead to a drastic decline in the indigenous fish population. And at this point in time, Mr. Commissioner, I think we have no idea to what extent the native people utilize the lower Moose basin and the adjacent coastal areas of James Bay . . . The acidification question was very pointedly avoided in the Onakawana Development Limited brief. The feasibility studies and, I anticipate, the plant design do not contemplate the scrubbing of sulphur compounds from the stack emissions, and here we have a parallel with . . . the plant at Atikokan."

(Dr. John Spence, Timmins, p. 1089)

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Concern about acidification relates to the possibility of sulphur dioxide in stack emissions acidifying the rain falling on northeastern Ontario and Quebec, and, as a result, reducing the productivity of forests, lakes and rivers. Associated with this would be a decline in wildlife and fish populations, upon which the native people depend for both food and income.

The Moose Factory Band Council, while not opposing the Onakawana project, stressed its concern that the environment be maintained and that development be carefully controlled:

*"We are not anti-development, but I want to emphasize that protective measures will have to be taken to ensure that a minimum social disruption will have to be realized, should any large development be undertaken, namely the Onakawana project. And I would like to underline that the developers and government unequivocally guarantee that no environmental damage will emanate from the stacks of any plant. One river system killed off is one river system too many."*

(Moose Factory Band Council, Moose Factory, p. 3295)

The James Bay Cree Society also expressed concern for rivers, based on what had happened in the past:

"The Onakawana Lignite Development Corporation has promised the native people of our area jobs for at least 30 years. They are also going to divert the Medicine Creek and the Onakawana River into the Abitibi River. This would certainly destroy wildlife species in these areas. The Abitibi River was once a magnificent river and had an abundance of many species of fine fish. Today, from the many dams on its system, the Abitibi River is dry and now unsuitable to travel on because of dirty muddy waters. Fish in this river have now completely disappeared. The Abitibi and Moose Rivers would certainly be completely contaminated from the waste disposals from the Onakawana project and the river diversions."

(James Bay Cree Society, Moose Factory, p. 2318)

present condition. Fortunately, at Onakawana, there is a confident possibility that after reclamation, the area will have measurable increase in value as a recreation area for man and productive habitat for wildlife."

(Onakawana Development Limited, Timmins, p. 956)

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Onakawana Development Limited's assertions about reclamation were challenged by Dr. John Spence:

"The parent company of Onakawana Development Limited, Manalta Coal Ltd., must be very aware of the difficulties and costs experienced in rehabilitating and revegetating areas that they have mined at Saskatchewan and Alberta, and I think, Mr. Commissioner, that if this enquiry decided to look at that past experience they would find enormous literature and very many problems in rehabilitating strip mines. Mr. Wolff's rosy picture of regenerating vegetation and wildlife is, at best I would submit, an experimental possibility."

(Dr. John Spence, Timmins, p. 1091)

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Onakawana Development Limited felt that environmental effects would be minimal and manageable:

"It is generally agreed that the area which will be mined at Onakawana is not 'sensitive' environmentally . . . Fundamentally, Mr. Commissioner, anything that improves drainage and replaces the top layer of muskeg with more fertile soil or till would improve the growing conditions and enhance wildlife habitat. In essence that is what strip mining the overburden, followed by proper reclamation, would do."

(Onakawana Development Limited, Timmins, p. 951)

Dr. Spence also felt that it was unlikely that a truly comprehensive assessment could be made under the Environmental Assessment Act, because it would look at the project in isolation and would not fully explore alternatives. The terms of reference of the assessment itself would not be set with the involvement of northerners and native people as well as government.

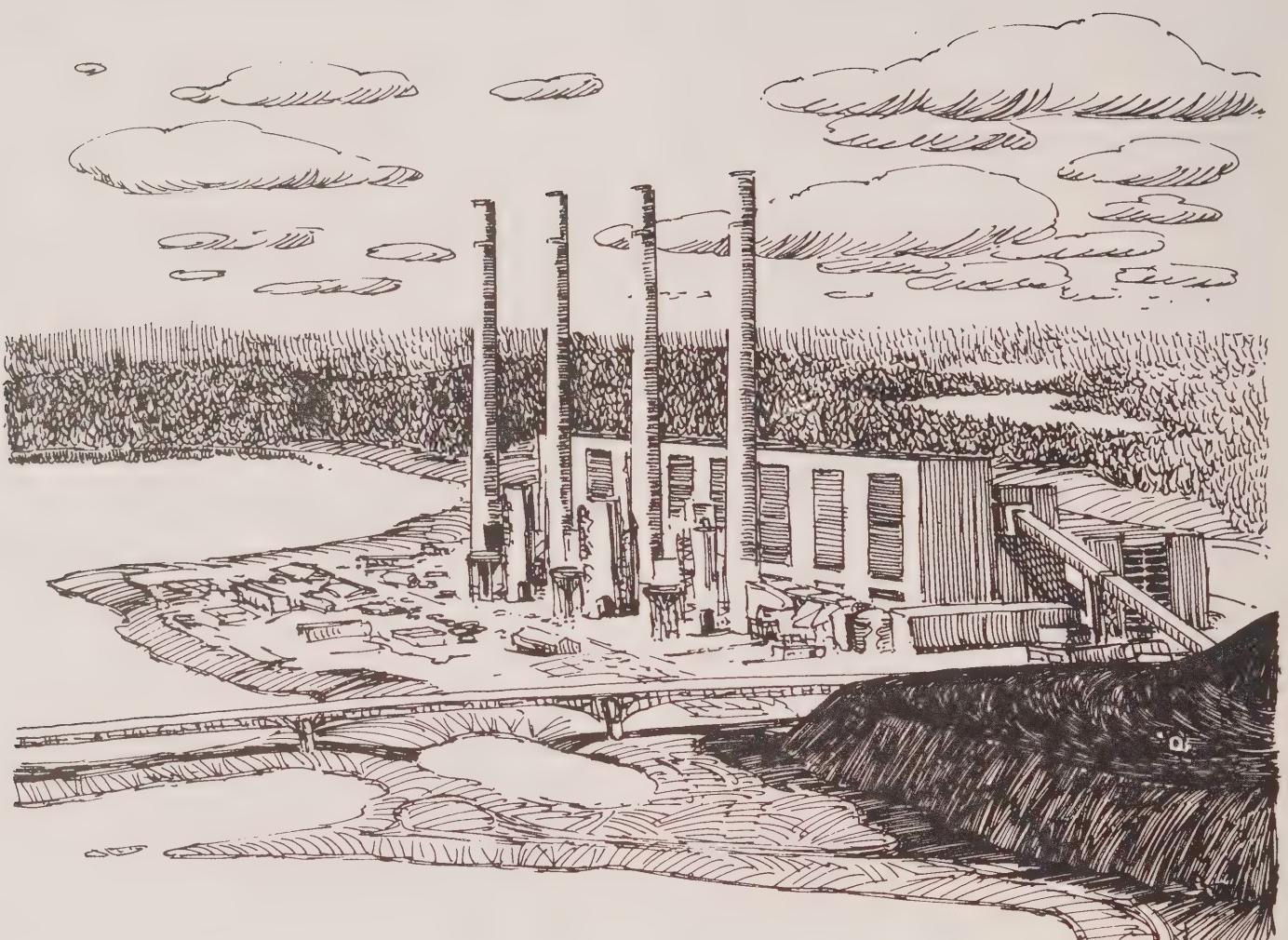
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On April 4, 1978, the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, in its interim report recommended that:

Onakawana Development Limited and the Ministry of the Environment should take immediate steps to discuss fully and openly the planned environmental assessment of the proposed lignite mine south of Moosonee with local communities and affected groups and that the company undertake to meet their concerns in its assessment. It is essential that the Commission should play an observing and counselling role in this first opportunity to test the Environmental Assessment Act process in relation to a major non-renewable resource project in the study area.

While accepting an environmental assessment under the Environmental Assessment Act and recognizing the need for environmental standards, Onakawana Development Limited made it clear that it was not prepared to go ahead if these standards and the assessment process proved too stringent. After listing what they had spent to date on environmental studies and what reclamation could be expected to cost, Onakawana Development Limited stated:

"For land which has little value to man today, that is an expensive price to pay merely to restore it to its



# Marmion Lake Project Worries Northerners

The Royal Commission was told that Ontario Hydro is proceeding with plans for the construction of an 800 megawatt coal-fired, electricity generating station near Atikokan. Despite Hydro's insistence that the projected plant will be designed so as not to harm the environment, many northerners persisted in their fears that the plant's sulphur dioxide emissions will harm both the land and the people, and that the operation of the plant on such a large scale could lead to permanent contamination of the waters. A public assessment of the plant was requested by northern spokesmen addressing the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment.

## Power Proposal Generates Differences

The plans of Ontario Hydro to build a one billion dollar thermal generating station near Atikokan, Ontario aroused considerable debate at the hearings of the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment.

While the plant actually will be sited south of 50, the Commission determined to hear submissions concerning the Marmion Lake project to see if any lessons could be learned from the way in which the project had been assessed and implemented.

With the prospect of iron ore mines<sup>1</sup> in the area closing within two years, representatives of the town of Atikokan told the Commission that they welcomed the Hydro project, mainly because it was a potential provider of jobs which would help stabilize the community during the current period of flux. Environmentalists, on the other hand, wondered whether the prospect of short-term construction jobs and relatively few permanent ones was worth the probable cost of the purity of the air and water of the region. Indian people, in particular, recalled negative experiences in the past, such as Ontario Hydro flooding of their lands without adequate compensation or advance preparation.

In response, Ontario Hydro representatives said that adequate safeguards do exist in the design and operation of the Marmion Lake plant, precautions which would prevent any significant negative effects to the environment.

Native people, nevertheless, remained anxious. They recalled hearing similar assurances in the past, statements assuaging fears regarding mercury pollution from pulp and paper mills. Northerners generally questioned whether the anticipated sulphur dioxide emissions and their link to mercury being released in water systems would, in time, spell the end to their traditional livelihoods of trapping, hunting and fishing. Ontario Hydro submissions rated the proposed plant as essential if the energy needs of northwestern Ontario are to be met in the future, otherwise brown-outs were predicted for the north.

A strong representation was made to the Commission that the Marmion Lake project be reviewed under the Environmental Assessment Act, even though it was excluded from such a review by the Ontario Cabinet on the grounds that the project was too far advanced in the planning to be reconsidered. In January 1978, clearing of the Marmion Lake construction site began, even though environmental and social questions remained unresolved, a matter of concern to northerners.

<sup>1</sup>Caland Iron Ore Co. Ltd. and Steep Rock Iron Mines Ltd.

## Acid Rain—Unwelcome Byproduct

A number of northerners made a point of expressing their concern to the Royal Commission that Ontario Hydro's Marmion Lake power project had been exempted from the Environmental Assessment Act. Passed in 1975 by the Ontario Legislature, the Environmental Assessment Act provides for the gauging of the impact of both private and government projects on the environment. Public and government projects are automatically assessed, unless they become exempted by a Cabinet decision. For a privately-initiated project to be examined under the act, regulations must be passed by Cabinet stating that the project is to be assessed.

By the time the Environmental Assessment Act became operative in October 1976, the provincial government believed that certain public projects were so far advanced that it would be impractical to require them to go through the environmental assessment procedure. The Marmion Lake coal-fired generating station near Atikokan in northwestern Ontario was one such project. Ontario Hydro by this time had completed its own preliminary environmental analysis. A representative of Ontario Hydro explained to the Commission the process by which the project was exempted from the Environmental Assessment Act:

*"Because of the advanced stage of planning and design for this development at the time of issuance of the regulations under the Environmental Assessment Act, Atikokan generating station received exemption from that act on October 14, 1976 (Order-in-Council No. 2887/76), subject to the following terms and conditions:*

*"That Ontario Hydro continue the present environmental analysis and public participation process, which was developed for the undertaking and well underway before the act came into force, and submit final proposals for the undertaking, including documentation of the public participation and review by Ontario government ministries, before beginning construction."*

(Ontario Hydro, Nakina, p. 1470)

Ontario Hydro submitted to the government, in June 1977, an updated environmental analysis and documentation of public participation. The project gained cabinet approval at that time under Order-in-Council 1707/77.

Representatives of several native communities told the Commission they feared the consequences of the Marmion Lake project. These people claimed that they did not know that public meetings were held in Atikokan to discuss the proposed development. Nor had they seen the technical and environmental studies which Ontario Hydro had commissioned. An Ontario Hydro spokesman stated:

*"In the public participation program, to my knowledge there were no native people in attendance."*

(Ontario Hydro, Nakina, p. 1474)

The public meetings and the reports used English. The majority of the Indian people in the affected communities speak Ojibway.

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The Commission was told that Ontario Hydro had decided against installing scrubbers, which would cost between \$60 and 100 million, because the environmental damage they would prevent was not sufficient to warrant such an expense. (Scrubbers are devices installed in the chimney stacks of the plant to reduce the emissions of sulphur dioxide and other pollutants produced by burning the coal.) Native spokesmen claimed the scrubbers were needed. Ontario Hydro claimed that even without the scrubbers the plant would meet the environmental standards of the Ontario government:

*"Certainly the issue of the pollution from our Atikokan plant has been of interest to Ontario Hydro because we have had to prepare an environmental assessment for that plant to make sure that the plant operated within the regulations of the provincial government and it certainly operates well within the regulations."*

(Ontario Hydro, Nakina, p. 1473)

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Because of the proximity of the plant site to the United States border, more than Ontario standards are involved. As Treaty #3 representatives pointed out:

*"While the proposed power plant will meet the sulphur dioxide standards of Canada and Ontario, the project will violate the United States and Minnesota standards."<sup>1</sup>*

(Treaty #3, Dryden, p. 425)

<sup>1</sup>In February 1978, the Ministry of the Environment submitted a report to the Commission entitled "The Atikokan Generating Station: A Discussion of Background and Status." The Ministry was satisfied that the sulphur dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ ) levels will meet not only provincial and federal standards, but would be "far below the threshold at which injurious environmental effects are known to occur." With respect to the United States and Minnesota standards for  $\text{SO}_2$  levels, the ministry acknowledged that the generating station would not meet these standards. However, its officials pointed out that:

*"The level of five micrograms/cubic meter is also below the measuring capabilities of any  $\text{SO}_2$  meters now available in the world. The Minnesota standard, therefore, is not enforceable, since the level to be obtained is a calculated, theoretical figure and cannot be measured."*

The ministry acknowledged that  $\text{SO}_2$  levels coming from the Marmion Lake Station would have to be considered against the already existing background level of  $\text{SO}_2$  and other pollutants in the environment.

The Ministry of the Environment and Ontario Hydro are carrying out a joint monitoring program on air and water quality in the area surrounding the Marmion Lake plant that will provide two to three years of pre-operation information about existing pollutants. The Ministry of the Environment report stated that:

*"If significant changes are recorded, then the need for scrubbers will be re-evaluated."*

It should be noted that Ontario Hydro intends to leave space in its construction plans for future addition of flue gas scrubbers if required at a later date.

The Commission learned in April 1978 that, while Canada had rejected submitting the Marmion Lake project for review by the International Joint Commission, the United States Environmental Protection Agency was studying the plant's possible effects.

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At a later hearing, the possibility was raised of a disagreement between Canada and the United States over the project's effects:

*"We now understand that the United States State Department have asked for a moratorium on the project until experts can assess its environmental impact. We also understand that the United States government may ask the International Joint Commission to intervene in the matter."*

(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2562)

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At issue is the effect of sulphur dioxide on the environment. Some scientists believe certain sulphur dioxide levels in the atmosphere can result in the acidification of rainfall and consequently of lakes and rivers. This could lead to the destruction of vegetation, and decline in the number of fish, birds and animals.

The Indian people's dependency on fresh water resources caused their concern about Hydro pollution. Treaty #3 brought a scientist, Dr. James R. Kramer, to speak before the Commission, who testified on the impact of long-range atmospheric transport of sulphur dioxide on the northern environment:

*"First of all, from our estimates, long-range transport and deposition of atmospheric pollutants extend at least to 55 north latitude in this area of Ontario. This is the lower limit because we have not measured the deposition any further north than that . . . The depositional level over the northwestern part of Ontario at present is sufficient to marginally destroy the accumulative capacity of the most susceptible lakes . . . The pollutants consist basically of acid sulphates and nitrates as well as trace metals and a few other substances, and basically their acid nature decreases the buffering capacity in the lakes and the lakes become acid and fish mortality sets in . . . In northern Ontario, much of the pollutants at present are imported from the United States . . . Emissions from proposed developments must be considered as adding to this background which is at present marginal for the most susceptible lakes."*

(Treaty #3, Dryden, p. 428)

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Treaty #3 spoke of the effect of rain acidified by sulphur dioxide emission:

*"Acid rain destroys trees, shrubs and mosses, and gradually kills the fish in lakes and rivers."*

(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2561)

There is another possible effect arising from acid rain which Treaty #3 representatives mentioned:

*"In Scandinavia, fish biologists were puzzled by unexpectedly high mercury levels in fish in a lake where no mercury had been dumped. The natural mercury in the environment was no greater in this lake than in the lakes of Scandinavia without a mercury problem. The Scandinavian scientists concluded that acid rain had fallen on the high mercury lake."*

(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2563A)

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What appears to have happened is that heavy metals such as mercury were leached from nearby land by the acid rain:

*"As you know, Mr. Commissioner, we have far too much mercury in our river systems already. We do not need any more."*

(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2563A)

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Treaty #3 urged that Ontario Hydro be required to incorporate the best available technology to protect air and water quality:

*" . . . the native people have been forced to carry the physical, social, cultural and environmental costs of projects such as Marmion Lake too long. Governments have repeatedly played environmental roulette with our lifestyles. It is prime time that someone stopped this insane game."*

(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2564)

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At the Commission's preliminary hearings, representatives of Treaty #3 called for a full environmental assessment of the Marmion Lake proposal with native participation:

*"Perhaps if public hearings into the project were held, Ontario Hydro could be convinced to apply sane and reasonable conservation practices, like building scrubbers into the plant."*

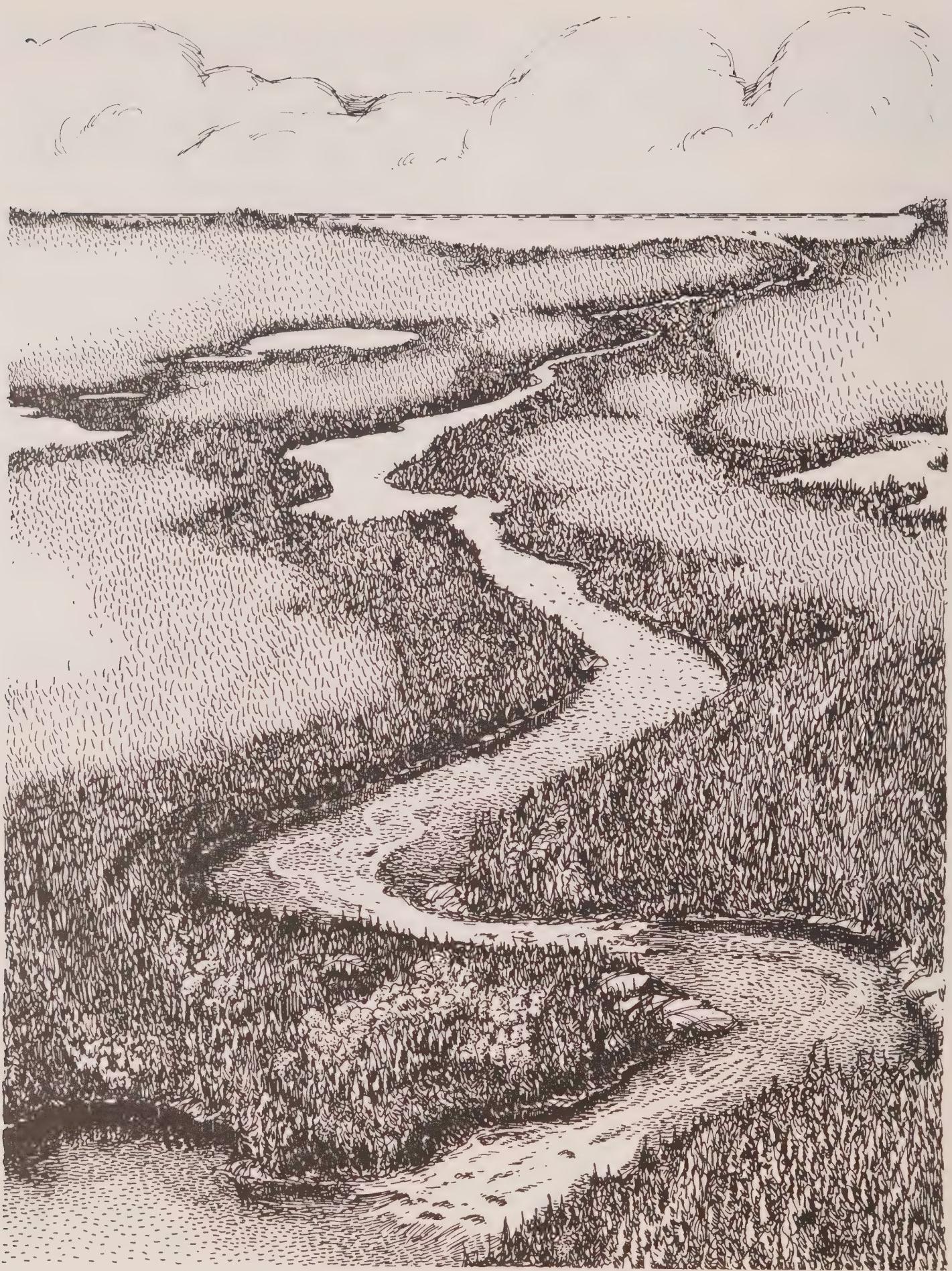
(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2860)

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In summary, Chief Peter Kelly set straight Treaty #3's position:

*"It has been reported that Treaty #3 is trying to stop the project. That is incorrect. We are merely trying to force Hydro to incorporate proper pollution-control devices in their power generating station."*

(Treaty #3, Kenora, p. 2863)



# The North's Wild Rivers—Their Power Potential

The Royal Commission was told that Ontario Hydro has studied the feasibility of harnessing power from northern rivers flowing into James and Hudson Bays. Although mining interests urged the development of this potential, native people expressed their fears that future development would bring them nothing more than had been experienced in the past — flooding and the social and economic destruction of their communities. However, a common ground was found when both Hydro and native people discussed the possibility of small-scale hydroelectric power supplying local needs.

## Water Harnessing Excites Fears

Northern speakers stated their gratitude for nature's provision of ample water in their regions.

In northern Ontario, water is as prevalent as land. The waterways were the first highways for travellers through this country. The first fur trading posts and settlements were on major lakes and rivers and relied on transport by canoe. The forest industries used the rivers to help drive timber to markets. The mining industry has also relied heavily on the north's abundant waters.

The north's lakes and rivers have provided northern residents with fresh water and food for centuries.

In the late 19th century, rivers were first harnessed to turn turbines and produce electricity. An assessment of all potential hydro sites over ten horsepower was made throughout the province with a view toward future development.

Hydroelectric potential was a consideration in government deliberations regarding both Treaty #3 and Treaty #9, at the turn of the century. With regard to Treaty #9, it was decided that:

"No site suitable for development of water-power exceeding 500 horsepower shall be included within the boundaries of any reserve."<sup>1</sup>

Ontario Hydro did not require northern water power immediately. Although the Ogoki River diversion and Lac Seul were developed in the 1920's, the English River's potential was not tapped until the 1950's. In the late 1960's a plan to divert the major rivers of northern Ontario flowing into James Bay came to the attention of the public. Behind this massive water diversion scheme was a proposal to sell either water or hydroelectric power to the United States.

Most northerners were of the opinion that water project plans be assessed not in isolation but together with other major projects proposed for the north.

<sup>1</sup>The James Bay Treaty, Treaty #9 Made in 1905 and 1906 and Adhesions Made in 1929 and 1930, "Agreement between the Dominion of Canada and the Province of Ontario," Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1964, p. 27.

## Water Power Projects—What Impacts?

Some of the last free-flowing wild rivers in Ontario with potential for hydroelectric power generation lie north of 50. The Commission was informed that various studies have been done to determine the feasibility of damming these rivers for the purposes of diversion south and for producing hydroelectric power.

Dr. Douglas Pimlott told the Commission that in 1965 a co-ordinating committee on northern Ontario water resources studies was established to examine the feasibility of diversion of the following river systems: Severn, Winisk, Attawapiskat, Albany and Moose. The committee's statement of objectives was:

"With respect to waters draining into James and Hudson Bay in Ontario, to assess the quantity and quality of water resources for all purposes; to determine present and future requirements for such waters; and to assess alternative possibilities for the utilization of such waters locally or elsewhere through diversions."

(Dr. Douglas Pimlott, Timmins, p. 917)

The committee made 13 progress reports between September 1966 and May 1977 in which references were made to approximately 40 reports on a variety of studies including technical aspects of water flow, engineering feasibility, geology, economic and cost-benefit analysis that included river diversion options. Dr. Pimlott pointed out that:

"It appears to me that the joint studies provide comprehensive data on virtually every relevant aspect of the development of the five basins, except for the potential socio-cultural and environmental impacts of such projects."

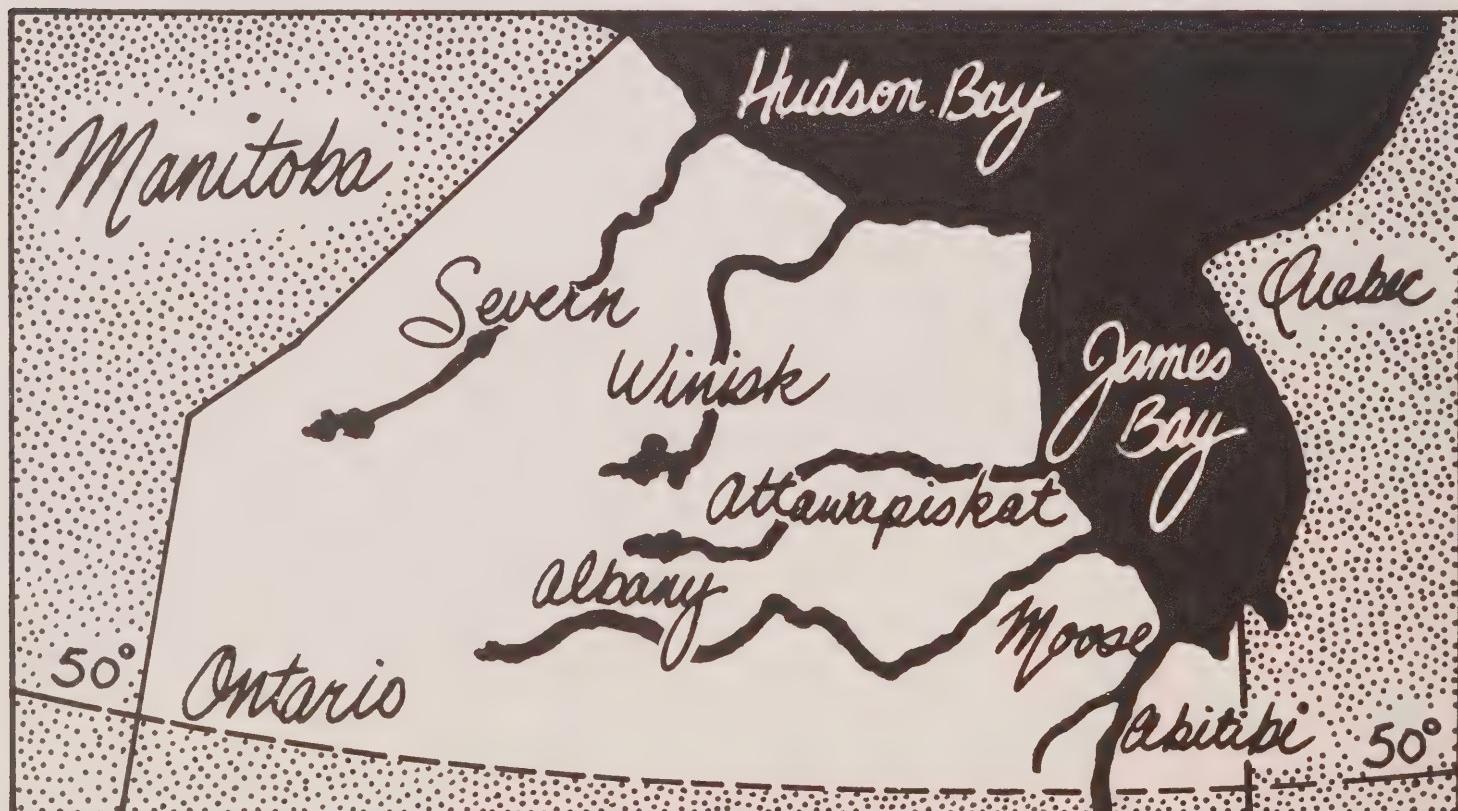
(Dr. Douglas Pimlott, Timmins, p. 918)

Dr. Pimlott outlined the public reaction to the prospect of river diversions and the possibility of exporting fresh water to the United States. In 1972, the federal and provincial governments issued news releases stating that no consideration was being given to water diversion for export to the United States.

Dr. Pimlott pointed out:

"The joint announcements made by the federal and Ontario governments in 1972 stated only that no consideration had been given to the export of water to the United States . . . There has been no official disavowal of interest in other aspects of the water resource potential of the region . . . Factors which mitigate against such a disavowal are the urgent desire for economic growth in northern Ontario, the forthcoming energy crisis, the quest for energy self-sufficiency, and the widespread belief that hydroelectricity is a pollution-free source of energy."

(Dr. Douglas Pimlott, Timmins, p. 919)



When Ontario Hydro appeared before the Commission, its representatives indicated that Hydro had participated in the original studies undertaken by the co-ordinating committee, although the federal government had played the leading role. Hydro was convinced by the studies and reports that diversion schemes were not feasible:

*"The proposal was deemed very uneconomic, mainly due to the high cost of the major diversions and the high cost of incorporating the facilities into our power grid."*

(Ontario Hydro, Timmins, p. 1223)

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In its written submission to the Commission, Ontario Hydro stated that:

*"Investigative work on northern rivers was suspended in 1976 because the government directed that no development of the Albany be undertaken pending the completion of the work of the Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning. Recently the provincial government clarified its position, indicating that no on-site studies are to be undertaken but office studies on northern rivers could proceed. As a consequence, an office re-assessment of available data is being undertaken. These studies do not contemplate any diversion schemes."*

(Ontario Hydro, brief submitted to the R.C.N.E., p. 22)

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The Ministry of Energy stressed, for the record, that:

*"In keeping with requests of Grand Council Treaty #9, as expressed to a meeting with the Ontario cabinet and in a submission to the Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning, the government has directed Ontario Hydro not to proceed with any plans to develop the Albany River's hydroelectric potential."*

(Ministry of Energy, Toronto, p. 2234)

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After clarifying its position with respect to the Albany River, Ontario Hydro outlined what other rivers it is currently examining north of 50:

*"... the Attawapiskat and Winisk Rivers ... have not yet proven economic ... based on photo-geometric studies only, and some additional studies will be done in 1979. On the Severn River, preliminary photo-geometric work ... indicates that there are about 18 sites with a potential of 615 megawatts ... A more detailed examination of the Severn is planned for 1979. On the English River, the Ear Falls extension and a new plant at Maynard Falls have proven economic and will be recommended for implementation under the Environmental Assessment Act. On the Jackfish River, two of the little Jackfish River sites have proven*

*economic compared to the alternative of fossil-fired generation, and a third site on the lower river is being studied as a means of improving flow conditions in that lower part of the river. All remaining sites on the Moose, Mattagami and Abitibi drainage system are being actively investigated at this time to prove engineering and economic feasibility. That work ... will continue in 1978 and 1979."*

(Ontario Hydro, Timmins, p. 1224)

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Ontario Hydro also reported that:

*"We are actively pursuing the development of small hydraulic generating units for use in suitable locations where hydraulic power is considered cheaper than diesel electric generation."*

(Ontario Hydro, Timmins, p. 1225)

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The Ministry of Energy stressed the work that is being done to develop small hydraulic sites:

*"The potential across northern Ontario at small sites is considerable, particularly for meeting local needs. New technology is being developed in this area which is economical, and the Ontario Ministry of Energy, in cooperation with Natural Resources and Northern Affairs and Ontario Hydro, is looking to this as a means of getting power to small communities in the north which will be more in keeping, or not the large-scale development which would overwhelm communities alone."*

(Ministry of Energy, Toronto, p. 2234)

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Resentment expressed over Ontario Hydro's development of hydroelectric potential in the north seemed to grow partly out of a feeling among northerners that their energy resources are being exploited with the south as the primary beneficiary. Ontario Hydro replied that while this was true in the past, it is no longer the case:

*"Many people in the north believe that most of the electricity from our northeast generation is transported to southern Ontario, and there are times of the year when we have got very high water flows, when we do transport some electricity to southern Ontario, but generally speaking, just the opposite is true, that northern Ontario requires assistance from the ... nuclear plants in the south to meet our electricity needs ... This has been true on an annual basis over the past four years, and we have been bringing in an ever-increasing amount of electrical energy from southern Ontario each year, and that of course is one of the reasons we are looking towards a new generating station up in our region."*

(Ontario Hydro, Timmins, p. 1221)

The Ontario Mining Association supported Ontario Hydro's position that more energy must be produced in the north:

"The OMA is of the opinion that there is considerable undeveloped hydroelectric generating capacity in northern Ontario and urges that this potential be developed as necessary to help meet the need for electrical energy in the area . . . The association urges that environmental consideration be carefully and sensibly balanced against the pressing need for additional energy resources in this region of the province."

(Ontario Mining Association, Timmins, p. 1012)

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People such as Dr. Pimlott, however, would argue that this is exactly what has occurred in the past, to the detriment of the environment and native people:

"Industrial societies have traditionally looked at only the development side of the equation. They have rationalized the degradation of the environment, the loss of animal resources and the destruction of native cultures . . . The forgotten side of the equation, it seems to me, is the environment and the social economic considerations of native people."

(Dr. Douglas Pimlott, Timmins, p. 914)

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Many native people speaking to the Commission agreed with this view. Their concern was based on their past experiences. As the Mattagami Band told the Commission:

"When the people first moved to the reserve, it was located on one side of the Mattagami River . . . The only development taking place was the construction of two dams on the Mattagami River. The people did not understand English and therefore did not know the controlling of the water levels would affect their lands and trees. The land became flooded and, just like Lac Seul, the burial grounds were covered. Ontario Hydro eventually paid a little compensation for the damages, but in no way did it reflect the value of the land to the people. Their land, trees and their burial grounds were sacrificed so that the mines of Timmins might have power. We ourselves did not receive electricity for another 50 years."

(Mattagami Band, Timmins, p. 1107)

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The Commission learned, as well, of the experience of the Islington Band. In 1954, Ontario Hydro completed construction of a hydro dam at Whitedog Falls on the Winnipeg River. The Commission was told that the log homes of 15 families were inundated and those families were required to relocate on the Whitedog Reserve in housing which was described as "cold and inadequate when compared with their solid log homes." (p. 2760). But different housing was not the only effect:

"The concentration of families in the one new location, the disorientation and disruption, together with the loss of trapping areas and wild rice areas began the process of disruption and social breakdown."

(Islington Band, Whitedog, p. 2760)

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Further, they received:

" . . . no compensation for flooded acreage, either in terms of dollars or alternate land . . . no compensation for the literally millions of dollars of wild rice that has been destroyed by Hydro releases or Lake of the Woods Control Board policies."

(Islington Band, Whitedog, p. 2760)

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Representatives of the band also said that the reserve did not receive any electricity until 1968, some 11 years after completion of construction.

Other effects of the Whitedog Falls dam were also mentioned:

"A hydro dam was constructed downriver causing severe water level fluctuations. Before the hydro dam was constructed it was easy for trappers to get 500 muskrats. After it was built the muskrat population diminished severely because after the ice formed the water level went down causing the muskrats to freeze to death and when the waters were too high the muskrat houses would flood and the muskrats would also freeze to death in that way."

(Chief Simon Fobister, Whitedog, p. 2790)

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The Commission was told about a dam built on the English River:

"It flooded many things — timber, wild rice fields, Indian reserves and small animal habitat. Where trappers used to get many muskrat they are now hard to find, they are scattered all over the lake. Fishing was ruined because of sticks and other floating articles."

(Baptist Bigblood, Whitedog, p. 2799)

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And about some effects of the Ogoki diversion:

"Years ago a diversion was made at Martin Falls to cause part of the water in the Ogoki River to flow south into the Jackfish . . . to maintain the level of Lake Nipigon . . . There used to be commercial fishing at Furland, Mud River and Gull Bay, but there has been none since the construction of the control dam causing silt deposits at an accelerated rate . . . that small volume of water from the Jackfish-cum-part-Ogoki has ended the spawning."

(Canon John Long, Nakina, p. 1527)

Most shocking to the native people was what they viewed as disregard shown for their burial grounds. The Chief of Lac Seul spoke to the Commission about this:

"Over 40 years ago, Ontario Hydro flooded my people's land to produce hydroelectric power. We were never told of the full extent of the flooding. We were never given full compensation for the flooding. And we were never given the resources to move our ancestor's graves and save them from a watery destruction. White graves would not have been treated in a similar manner."

(Lac Seul Reserve, Sioux Lookout, p. 45)

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Native people feared that future hydro developments would repeat the mistakes of the past, and their concern for their ancestors' graves was a prominent one:

"The damming of the Albany River is seen to create extensive flood conditions covering prime trapping ground, prime fishing grounds and above all, prime wild rice paddies we have developed. Furthermore, to flood this land eastward of the Osnaburgh Reserve is to also desecrate numerous graveyards of our ancestors who are buried in that area. We have seen this already in the past."

(Osnaburgh Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1809)

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The land is their link with the past and the native people fear its destruction:

"If the land is flooded it will destroy the past of the Indian people. The future will be bad for our children if it happens. We are also very concerned about the graves of our ancestors that will be destroyed if the

land is flooded. These graves are very important for the Anishnawbe people and it would hurt our people if this link with the past was destroyed."

(Chief Eli Moonias, Geraldton, p. 1372)

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The land is also their home and they do not want to move again:

"We know for a fact that if this development (involving the Severn, Attiwapiskat, Albany and Winisk Rivers) is allowed to go through we will face immense suffering and we will face flooding. All those communities situated on low ground will be flooded."

(James Masakeyash, Osnaburgh, p. 1790)

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Treaty #9 told the Commission that there have been no improvements in consultation since the earlier dams were built and that this situation must change:

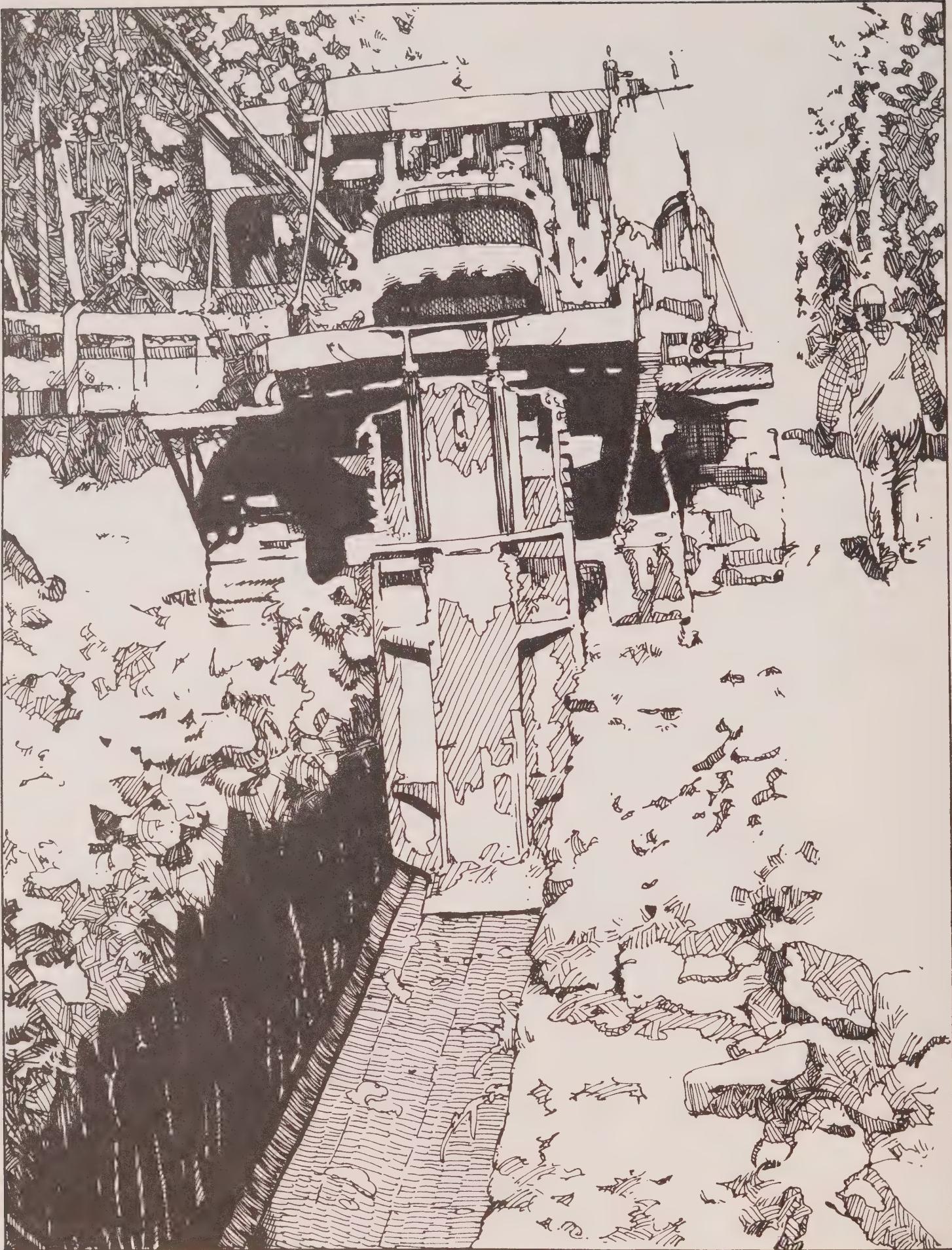
"Now, as in the past, there is no consultation prior to the building of any dams. We heard about the dams, when the bulldozers started moving, and when the flooding began. This is not acceptable. We want full disclosure of all plans concerning our northern rivers, and full consultation."

(Treaty #9, Sioux Lookout, p. 123)

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This request was repeated by other northerners over nearly every issue affecting or affected by the development of northern resources — northerners must be involved, must be consulted, must be provided with full information about proposed developments.





# Pipeline Prospect Raises Hopes and Anxieties

The prospect of transporting natural gas from the eastern Arctic, south by pipeline through northern Ontario, elicited a wide range of reactions at Royal Commission hearings. Many northerners welcomed the proposed pipeline as a source of jobs and, possibly, cheaper energy prices. Others argued that the north will not experience reduced costs of energy, since much of the transported natural gas will find its way to United States markets. Native people were concerned about the environmental disturbances that construction and operation of a pipeline would cause. They feared that any environmental assessment of the project would ignore their interest. Several submissions, both native and non-native, asked that the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment contribute in some manner to the assessment of the Polar Gas pipeline, despite the fact that pipelines crossing provincial boundaries are under federal jurisdiction.

## Are Polar Gas Reserves Needed?

Should a provincial commission of inquiry in the spirit of its mandate examine the environmental implications of a proposed pipeline, a federal matter?

This question was posed to Ontario's Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, and an affirmative response urged on it by a number of people. Under its mandate the Commission may concern itself with the effects on the environment of major undertakings north of 50, such effects defined to include social, economic and cultural concerns.

The Commission was told of an application before the National Energy Board from the Polar Gas Project — a group of companies proposing to build a natural gas pipeline from Melville Island in the eastern Arctic through northern Manitoba and northern Ontario to just east of Longlac, connecting with an existing pipeline. The Ontario portion would extend a distance of 453 miles.

The transporting of natural gas from Canada's Arctic south by pipeline became a highly regarded possibility in the early 1970's, when a proposal by an Arctic gas consortium to build a pipeline through the Northwest Territories south to Alberta, seemed an answer to the emergence of the energy crisis in North America. The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, headed by Mr. Justice Thomas Berger, looked carefully at this and other proposals for a northern pipeline and the potential socio-economic and environmental effects on the land.

The inquiry recommended that no pipeline be built along any route that would disrupt the delicate environment of the far north, and further recommended an environmental assessment, and settlement of native land claims before another route is chosen.

In the light of the Berger Inquiry and the subsequent decision by the United States and Canadian governments to cooperate in bringing gas south from Prudhoe Bay, Alaska through the proposed western Alaska Highway pipeline, some northern Ontarians appearing before the Commission questioned the need for consideration of the proposed Polar Gas Project.

They spoke of the potential of the Alaska Highway pipeline in the west, the promise of energy conservation policies in the United States and Canada and the enormity of the proven reserves of the Alberta tar sands. In addition, tankers bringing liquified natural gas to Maritime ports could, in their view, preclude the need for a pipeline through northern Manitoba and northern Ontario.

A representative of the Polar Gas Project told the Commission that he and his colleagues are proceeding with their proposal on the assumption that theirs is the best way to bring gas to southern and eastern consumers. Polar Gas officials also reported that they have filed an application with the National Energy Board and that they are to submit their project to the federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process. A construction start was hypothesized for the late 1980's or early 1990's.

# From the Arctic, Southeast through Ontario

The Polar Gas Project is designed to bring natural gas from the eastern Arctic, south by pipeline, to be fed into the existing TransCanada Pipeline system near Longlac, Ontario. Feasibility studies and work were begun in 1972. The six participant groups are TransCanada Pipelines Limited (project manager), Panarctic Oils Limited, the Ontario Energy Corporation (a provincial government agency), Petro-Canada (a federal crown corporation), Tenneco Oil of Canada Limited, and Pacific Lighting Gas Development Limited. By the end of 1977, some \$60 million had been spent in advancing the case for this project.

Before it can be built, the Polar Gas pipeline must be assessed and approved by the National Energy Board. The Board assessment will likely include public hearings, as will the federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process to which the project proposal will also be submitted. The project will also be reviewed by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in connection with the required application to use and occupy land in the Northwest Territories under the Territorial Lands Act. The Polar Gas Project, if it proceeds, will be subject to extensive assessment at the federal level because of the federal jurisdiction over pipelines crossing provincial boundaries.

A number of people addressing the Commission felt that the federal assessment process might be inadequate and that there should be a mechanism for re-viewing the project at the local level so that the needs and concerns of the people of northern Ontario could be raised and considered. The York University Polar Gas Case Study Group detailed what it saw as inadequacies in the federal assessment processes for Polar Gas and urged the commission to assume an active role:

*"The fact that the Commission is directed to consider the impacts of major developments in northern Ontario indicates that Polar Gas will be examined in concert with other developments which contribute to cumulative impacts on the land and people. The Commission is in the unique position of being able to view separate development projects in concert with and not in isolation from development issues. It is imperative that the Commission subject the Polar Gas Project to a thorough evaluation as existing regulatory structures are seen to be inadequate."*

(York University Polar Gas Case Study Group, Geraldton, p. 1296)

According to the York Study Group, the National Energy Board's assessment will prove inadequate, since it does not allow for a review of options or alternatives to a pipeline, nor would it review the pipeline within the total context of all proposed developments for the area. The group recognized that the provincial government has no jurisdiction in the matter but felt, nevertheless, that the Commission might be the only vehicle presently constituted for effectively influencing the assessment process:

*"The mandate of the Royal Commission specifically*

*directs the inquiry to study alternative ways of implementing projects and consider alternative approaches to meet the socio-economic and cultural needs of northern communities. Hence, the entire Polar Gas Project could be examined after alternative approaches have been considered, and from the alternative processes perspective which emerges. In this manner the project would be assessed on the basis of long-term socio-cultural goals of the region."*

(York University Polar Gas Case Study Group, Geraldton, p. 1305)

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The Commission was told that:

*"Some 11 native communities in northern Ontario will be affected by the development. Native people and Treaty #9 have demonstrated a concern about the project and indicated that it is their desire that the Commission include the Polar Gas pipeline within the scope of its examination."*

(York University Polar Gas Case Study Group, Geraldton, p. 1295)

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Treaty #9 representatives stated their view that the Commission should investigate the Polar Gas Project:

*"There has never been an effective and comprehensive democratic vehicle for assessing diverse and large-scale land developments. We, therefore, urge the Commission, in its role as a conscientious body of inquiry, to undertake a broad and detailed examination of all aspects of several different types of development projects, such as Onakawana, and other energy exploitation schemes: Polar gas, the Reed Paper type of projects, Prospections Mining Limited, in fact, all other forms of existing and potential resource exploitation."*

(Treaty 9, Moose Factory, p. 3354)

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Polar Gas representatives, on the other hand, made it clear that they felt the Commission did not have a role to play in the assessment process. After detailing the assessment process with which this consortium is currently faced, a spokesman for the project stated:

*"In order to obtain the necessary federal government approvals to construct a natural gas pipeline there will be two public reviews of the environmental and socio-economic matters by agencies of the federal government. We understand that it is neither the mandate nor the intent of the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment to assess the effects on the physical or social environment of specific projects north of the 50th parallel in Ontario. Therefore, it is not the intent of the Polar Gas Project to appear as an advocate for the project in public hearings to be conducted by the Royal Commission, nor to file a brief or submission for such a purpose with the Commission."*

(Polar Gas Project, Geraldton, p. 1261)

The role of various provincial ministries in the assessment of Polar Gas was also raised at the hearings. The Ministry of the Environment explained that since pipelines crossing provincial boundaries are under federal jurisdiction, the role of that ministry would be to coordinate the provincial input to the federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment explained how that provincial input would be made:

"We will participate in the early stages when the guidelines are being developed for the proponent, as in the case of Polar Gas, and at the stage when the documentation is fully down on paper and the submissions are being made to us, and to the appropriate federal agencies. We will co-ordinate the government of Ontario's review of that document and participate as interveners at the time that the matter goes to hearing."

(Ministry of the Environment, Red Lake, p. 578)

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The ministry's position was supported by some observers:

"In Ontario, the Ministry of the Environment has wisely chosen not to participate on the Environment Assessment Panel responsible for reviewing Polar Gas. Instead, the ministry will co-ordinate and represent provincial interests before the panel."

(York University Polar Gas Case Study Group, Geraldton, p. 1302)

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The Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs (TEIGA) suggested a possible role for the Commission in the Polar Gas assessment framework:

"As Arctic gas may well prove critical to future energy supplies in Ontario, and as you are well aware pipeline routes to bring gas to the south have been proposed that would pass through the north of 50 area, such a pipeline could involve major issues in connection with native claims and benefits. We hope that the Commission might provide important inputs into the process of resolving these issues, so that there are clear guidelines for whatever major developments of this sort do develop in the future."

(TEIGA, Timmins, p. 861)

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The question of the provincial government's involvement in the Polar Gas Project was raised. The Ontario Energy Corporation, an agency of the Ministry of Energy, is one of the participants in the project. A representative of the Ministry of Energy sought to explain its policy:

"The intention has been to keep the Polar Gas Project alive in its present position while we look at the feasibility. No commitment has been made by government to proceed with these projects beyond the application

stage, the application for approval. In other words, there is no consideration being given to investment in the construction of a pipeline."

(Ministry of Energy, Toronto, p. 2235)

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The Ministry of Energy also stressed the need for eastern Arctic gas. It foresaw shortages of natural gas by the mid 1980's unless such frontier supplies are brought on stream:

"It should be emphasized that the ministry regards the Polar Gas Project as a potential means of providing future energy supplies for Ontario as our current sources of supply of natural gas and crude oil begin to run out, and as a help to fill the gap until renewable energy sources can play a major role."

(Ministry of Energy, Toronto, p. 2235)

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Other people considered the primary motivation for the Polar Gas Project was the supplying of energy to United States markets:

"It has been suggested that if the Polar Gas pipeline is approved in the near future, the economics of pipeline construction and financing will result in the export of major gas 'surpluses' to the United States."

(York University Polar Gas Case Study Group, Geraldton, p. 1297)

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People from Pickle Lake, which could become the administrative centre for the Ontario portion of the Polar Gas pipeline, did not agree. In fact, they felt that one of the attractions of the pipeline proposal was:

"...cheaper energy for the northwest. We will be the first area to receive benefit of this gas."

(Improvement District of Pickle Lake, Pickle Lake, p. 1677)

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Once again, the major attraction of the pipeline proposal, is the jobs that it would create. The Polar Gas Project outlined the employment opportunities that the pipeline would generate:

"Initially, the Polar Gas pipeline in northern Ontario will require approximately 75 permanent employees. This number will increase to 130 when the additional compressor stations are added... Manpower requirements vary over the five years of construction from several hundred to a peak of over 1,500 in the fifth year. On the average, some 1,000 people will be engaged each year in pipelaying and associated activities in Ontario."

(Polar Gas Project, Geraldton, p. 1255)

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Not everyone felt that jobs justified the project. It was unclear how many permanent jobs would go to unskilled northerners, especially to native people. The Ontario

Native Women's Association expressed fear that the social costs were being overlooked:

"We feel that there is a complete lack of knowledge about the Polar Gas pipeline by the majority of the affected native population, and that the Polar Gas pipeline will be or could be offered as an incentive for a greater economic position without regard to the oncoming social costs. In fact, it is our belief that the only jobs that would be created by this pipeline are for the unskilled labourer, jobs like clearing the land, a job that would last only a very short time, and then the native would be replaced by highly skilled personnel, leaving our people again to fade into the background. They will be forced to live with the aftermath of their disrupted environment. Campsites of 500 to 1,500 or more men, single and married, would not help our native population. The environment will suffer from the heavy equipment and our social and cultural identity will be lost with the results of the campsites."

(Ontario Native Women's Association, Geraldton, p. 1327)

Canon Long agreed that the jobs would not likely offset the social costs which a pipeline would create:

"The Arctic gas pipeline could give many at least temporary employment, but not permanent jobs. When the Otter Rapids project was undertaken, the late Bishop Neville Clark met with the Hydro officials in Toronto who agreed to hire up to 50% of the unskilled work force from native settlements . . . Perhaps such a 50-50 unskilled labour force arrangement could be invoked. There is that hope for the men, good pay and good working conditions; but there is no such hope for the girls who remain vulnerable, and there are many white people who are ever ready to take advantage of them."

(Canon John Long, Nakina, p. 1532)

Fears of environmental harm combined with the knowledge of what development has done to the native social fabric, led many native people to be wary about Polar Gas:

"This pipeline which is to run near the Osnaburgh Reserve can also create more extensive negative disadvantages if it is allowed to go ahead now. Again, caribou, moose, fur-bearing animals, graveyards, wild rice paddies and indeed our economic proposals are threatened. This is not to mention our already fragile native culture and social life."

(Osnaburgh Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1810)

The proposed pipeline route would also pass close to Wunnumin Lake Reserve. The chief of Wunnumin Lake showed the Commission a land use map indicating where the people hunt, fish and trap:

"If you look at this black line, Mr. Commissioner, this

is where the Polar Gas pipeline is proposed to go through. You can see that it will disrupt the traplines and fishing areas which our people have inherited from generation to generation."

(Wunnumin Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1889)

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A Treaty #9 elder spoke to the Commission of his concerns about the proposed pipeline:

"Today we also know about a proposal to construct the pipeline through our grounds, a pipeline which will carry natural gas, a proposal for which we must seek a definite alternative, because as native people we know that if this development is allowed to go ahead at this time it will have serious ramifications on all aspects of present native life and their present methods of harvesting this land. We know sooner or later that this development, if allowed to go through, will create monstrous environmental effects."

(James Masakeyash, Osnaburgh, p. 1790)

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Concern was shared by the Bearskin Lake Band:

"We do not want outside people coming and telling us that they are putting a pipeline 20 miles upstream from our settlement and proceeding to clear away our trees for this pipeline. We do not want huge corporations coming in and telling us to move off our land for money's sake. No, Mr. Hartt, we want to be treated as equals, to be treated as a people. Mr. Hartt, it looks to us, as if we were not even alive; the introduction of these huge projects threatens the very existence of the native people."

(Bearskin Lake Band, Osnaburgh, p. 1857)

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The people of Sandy Lake expressed the same frustration:

"But in the meantime, and as an intermediate step, we want to be consulted. It is not right that Reed should destroy us and not tell us until they are finished. It is not right that Polar Gas should sneak down behind our backs while we are still looking northwest at the Berger report."

(Sandy Lake Band, Sandy Lake, p. 2422)

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Judging by their experience and the lack of meaningful consultation during development in the past, the native people expressed concern about the type of assessment which Polar Gas would undergo. They felt they should be involved in that assessment, and urged the Commission to serve them as a vehicle for advocating that involvement. Other people affirmed the relevance of such involvement:

"The effect of pipelines such as the proposed Polar Gas line should be examined in light of its impact on the existing native economy and lifestyle."

(Committee in Support of Native Concerns, Toronto, p. 2242)



